

**Antarctic Specially Protected Area No. 117 (Specially Protected Area No. 21)
Avian Island, North-west Marguerite Bay**

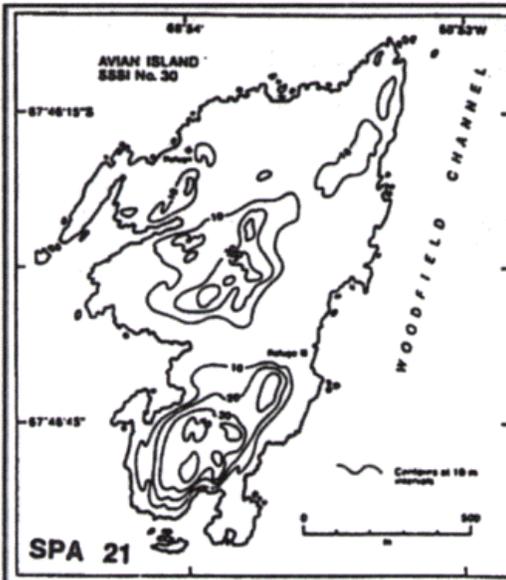
1. *Geographical location.* Avian Island (67°46'S, 68°54'W) lies 0.25 km south of the south-west tip of Adelaide Island in north-west Marguerite Bay, south-west Antarctic Peninsula

2. *Management Plan*

i. *Description of Area.* The Area consists of Avian Island together with its littoral zone. It is 1.45 km long by 0.8 km at its widest (total area about 49 ha), and rises to just over 40 m altitude in the south. It is almost entirely ice-free in summer. There are several shallow melt pools, the largest being on the eastern raised beach terrace. There are two small dilapidated refuge huts, one near the north-west and the other near the mid-east shores of the island.

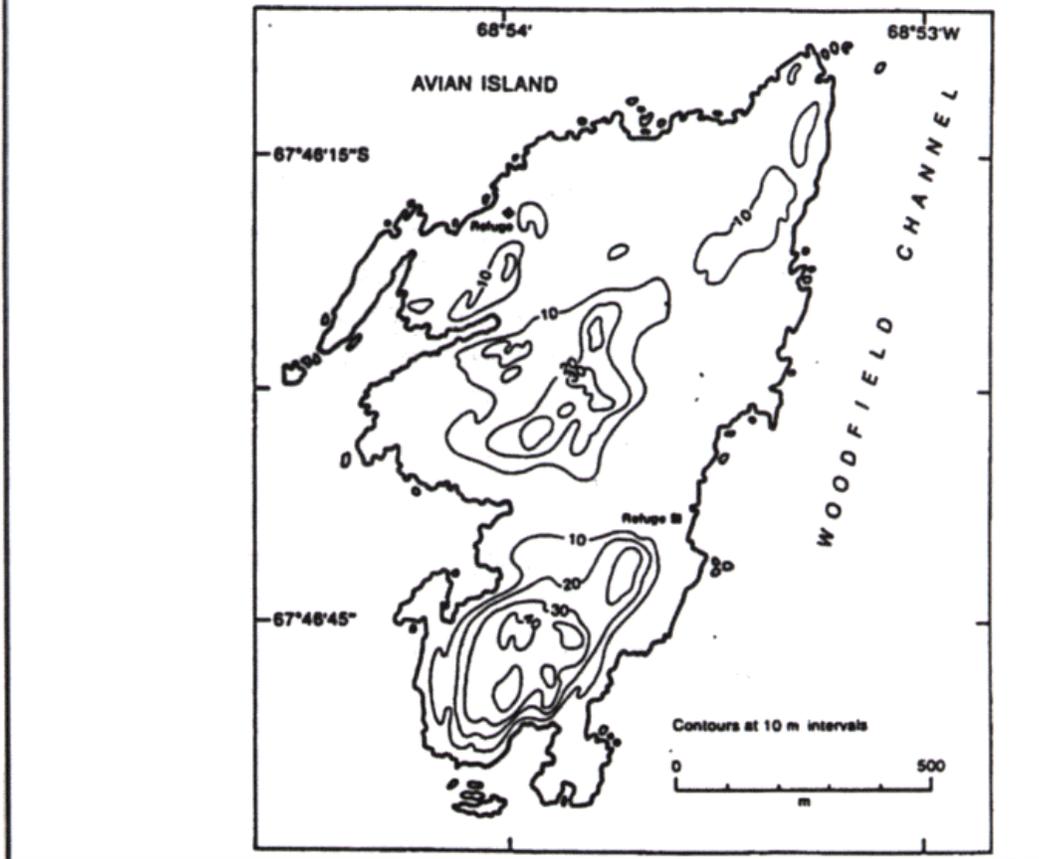
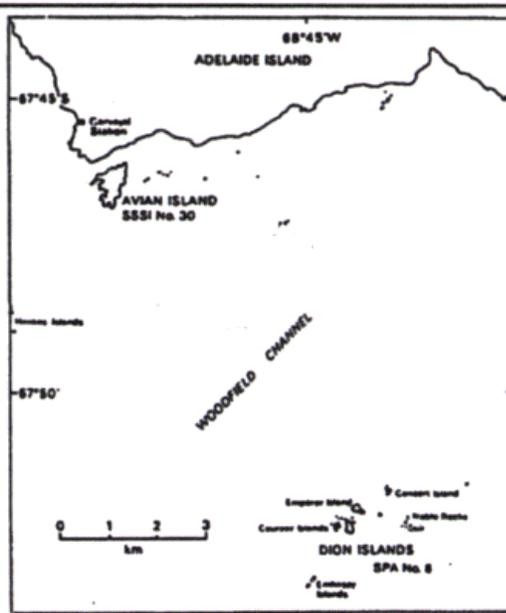
ii. *Reason for designation.* The Area is unique in the Antarctic Peninsula region for its abundance and diversity of breeding seabirds, the most important of which are: Adélie penguins (*Pygoscelis adeliae*) about 36,000 pairs; Blue-eyed shags (*Phalacrocorax atriceps*) about 670 pairs; Southern Giant petrels (*Macronectes giganteus*) about 250 pairs; Dominican gulls (*Larus dominicanus*) about 60 pairs (total adult birds about 200); skuas (*Catharacta maccormicki*) 30 pairs (total adult birds about 200); Wilson's storm petrels (*Oceanites oceanicus*) several hundred pairs. Several other birds are frequent visitors, breeding elsewhere in Marguerite Bay. Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddellii*) breed in small numbers around the shores of the island, and other species of seals occasionally come ashore, particularly fur seals (*Arctocephalus gazella*) in increasing numbers during summer. Bryophyte vegetation is sparse but nitrophilous

Map A*



SPA 21, Avian Island

Map B*



ASPA 117

Map C*

lichen communities are well-developed; vascular plants are absent. The Giant petrel colony is the farthest south known breeding location and represents about a quarter of the population breeding on the entire Antarctic Peninsula. The Blue-eyed shag colony is one of the largest known in the Antarctic and is very close to the southern limit of the species' breeding range; it represents about 85% of the total population breeding south of the Antarctic Circle. The Adélie penguin colony is the largest on the Antarctic Peninsula and contains a third of the total population breeding in the region.

iii. Date of designation and originator. Originally designated as SSSI No. 30, November 1989, Recommendation XV-6, by UK; proposed designation as SPA, July 1990, UK.

iv. Access points. Access should be from the sea as close as possible to either of the refuge huts.

v. Entry permit requirement. Entry into the Area is only in strict accordance with a current permit, issued by a Participating Government or its authorised representative, specifically for a compelling scientific purpose which cannot be served elsewhere, or for a site inspection, and which will not jeopardise any aspect of the natural ecosystem or its biota within the Area (see Antarctic Treaty Agreed Measures for the Conservation of Antarctic Fauna and Flora, Article VIII). Details of the visit should be included in the national annual report of Exchange of Information for the same Antarctic season in which the activities were carried out.

vi. Prohibitions. To avoid or minimise human impact it is prohibited to:

- a. drive any vehicle within the Area over-snow vehicles used to visit the island must be left at the shoreline.;
- b. bring any dog into the Area;
- c. land a helicopter within the Area;
- d. overfly the Area by any aircraft below 250 m above the highest point;
- e. use any of the Area's coves or bays for anchoring or mooring seacraft, except in accordance with the permit;
- f. incinerate, bury or otherwise dispose of any non-human waste within the Area; all such waste must be removed from the Area;
- g. leave depots of fuel, food, or any other supplies within the Area, except at the refuges, unless they are further required within the same season, at the end of which they must be removed;
- h. erect any form of building within the Area, besides the restoration and maintenance of the two existing refuges.

vii. Pedestrian routes. None specified, but every precaution must be taken to avoid disturbance of any breeding bird (especially Giant petrels, which pedestrians should not approach closer than 100 m) or seal, unless required as specified in the permit.

viii. Scientific research and sampling. All activities must conform strictly with those specified in the permit to enter the Area.

ix. Inspection and maintenance. Inspection visits should be made to the Area at least once every five years to assess the state of the site and to monitor any significant biological or environmental changes. Other visits should be made as necessary to maintain boundary markers, notices, etc.